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BARRETT



THE FRONT COURT, HALL & HALL STAIRS.

THE SOCIETY OF APOTHECARIES OF LONDON.

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY C. R. B. BARRETT,

Author of "The History of the Society of Apothecaries."

AMONG what, in common parlance, are styled the "City Companies," the Society of Apothecaries of London holds a position which is in certain respects unique. For not only does it possess officials, grades of membership, court rules and by-laws, founded on the model of more ancient guilds, but it is, in addition, a Society which, acting as an examining body, has the legal right to grant diplomas which fully qualify the recipient to practise in medicine and surgery. It is also a private manufacturing body, engaged in the preparation of pure drugs, and, besides this, at its private store retails the drugs so made and also dispenses prescriptions.

Formerly the Society acted as an educational body, especially in botany, but the physic garden at Chelsea has now been relegated to another authority; the lecturer in botany is no longer appointed, examinations in that science are no more held in connection with the garden, and the botanical prizes and medals are things of the past.

There has, however, been in recent years at least one attempt at the revival of the old "simpling days," or botanical excursions, but whether this will be retained as an annual custom remains to be seen.

The home of the Society is at Apothecaries' Hall—an old-world building in that narrow thoroughfare, Water Lane, Blackfriars, E.C.

Of the points of interest (and they are many) to be found at the Hall, mention will be made hereafter. First, however, it is fitting in the briefest manner to sketch the rise of this now important Society.

Of the status and the functions of the apothecary before the time of James I. very



THE ARMS OF THE SOCIETY

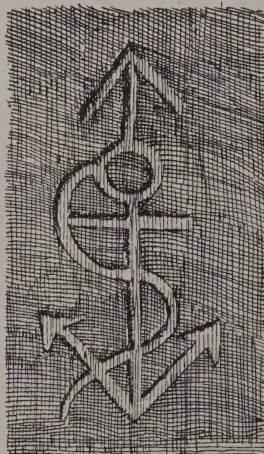
little indeed is known. Here and there mention is made of the profession or calling. Legend credits, and probably without any foundation in fact, that Richard FitzNigel, or FitzNeale, Bishop of London, acted in that capacity to Henry II. The first documentary mention is to be found in Rymer's "*Fœdera*," in which *Cursus de Gangeland*, styled "an apothecary of London," is stated to have been granted a pension of sixpence per diem for attending Edward III. while lying sick in Scotland.

The first Act of Parliament directly concerning doctors was passed in 1511, and was designed to prevent "ignorant persons" from practising physic and surgery. By it the Bishop of London, or the Dean of St. Paul's, aided by four doctors of physic and of surgery, or other expert persons, were to examine candidates. In 1518 the Physicians were incorporated, and in 1540 the Barber-Surgeons. In 1543, as these two bodies allowed abuses to creep in, another Act was passed which gave leave for "persons being no common surgeons" to minister "outward medicines." These "persons being no common surgeons" were undoubtedly the forerunners of the later on incorporated Apothecary. It was not until the year 1606 that Apothecaries obtained recognition by charter, and this recognition they had to share with the Grocers, with whom they remained allied till December 6, 1617, when

King James I. formed them into a separate Company under the designation of the Master, Wardens, and Society of the Art and Mystery of the Apothecaries of the City of London.

This Charter, under which the Society still holds, is a most voluminous document; its translation occupies no less than twenty closely printed quarto pages. From it, the King would appear to have been moved towards its granting by the advice of Theodore de Mayerne and Henry Atkins, Doctors of Physic, his "discreet and faithful Physicians." It is important to mention this, as the common tradition at Apothecaries' Hall obtains, that the founder of the Society was one Gideon de Laune, the Queen's Apothecary. In the Charter, however, the name of de Laune only appears as one of the Assistants. Some years later, when his name was proposed for the Mastership, his election was the subject of the first contest for that position. It should be remarked that de Laune was an alien. How the tradition arose cannot be traced, but this much may be said: that neither in the Minute Books of the Society—which are perfect—nor in the inscriptions beneath the bust and portrait of de Laune, is this honour claimed for him.

Now, it would be interesting here to draw attention to the class of men who were members of the Society in its early days. That they



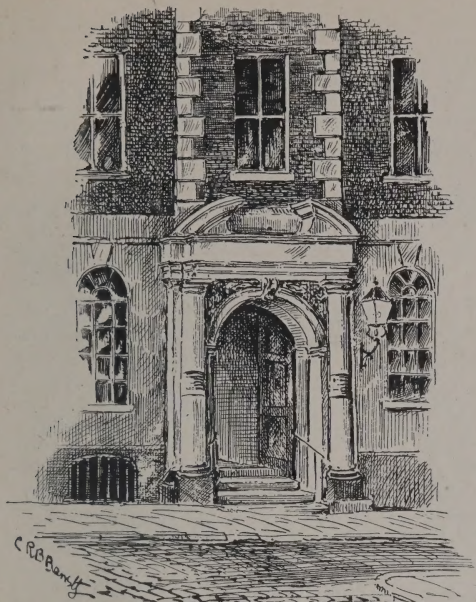
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Brand and Seal.



Possible Badge or Trade Mark of Navy Stock.

were of superior standing is shown by the fact that most of them were cadets of old and well-established county families. A glance at the armorial border of the last page of this article shows this. The coat armour there given is derived from authentic sources, heralds' visitations, etc. It must be

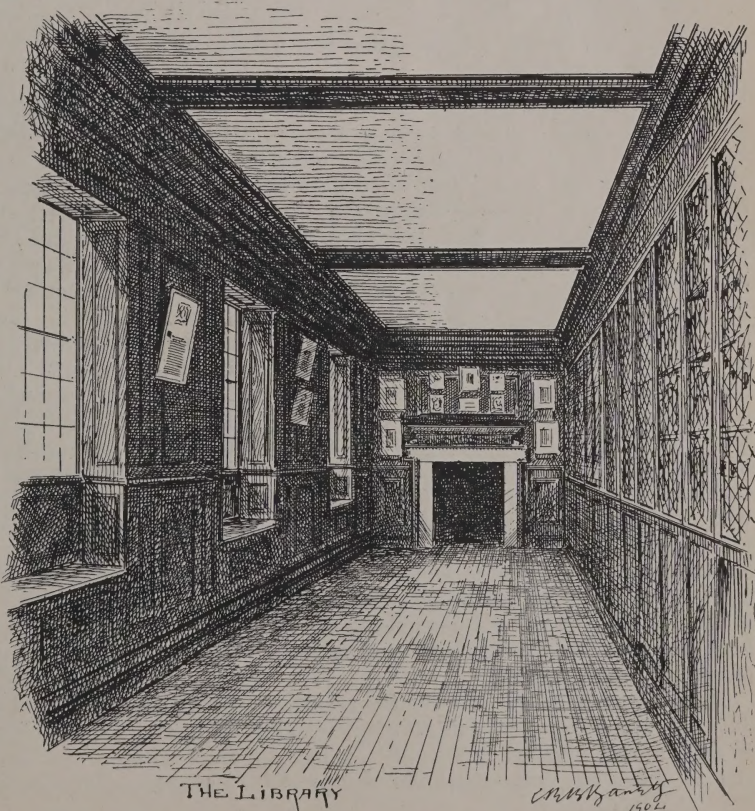


THE GATEWAY.

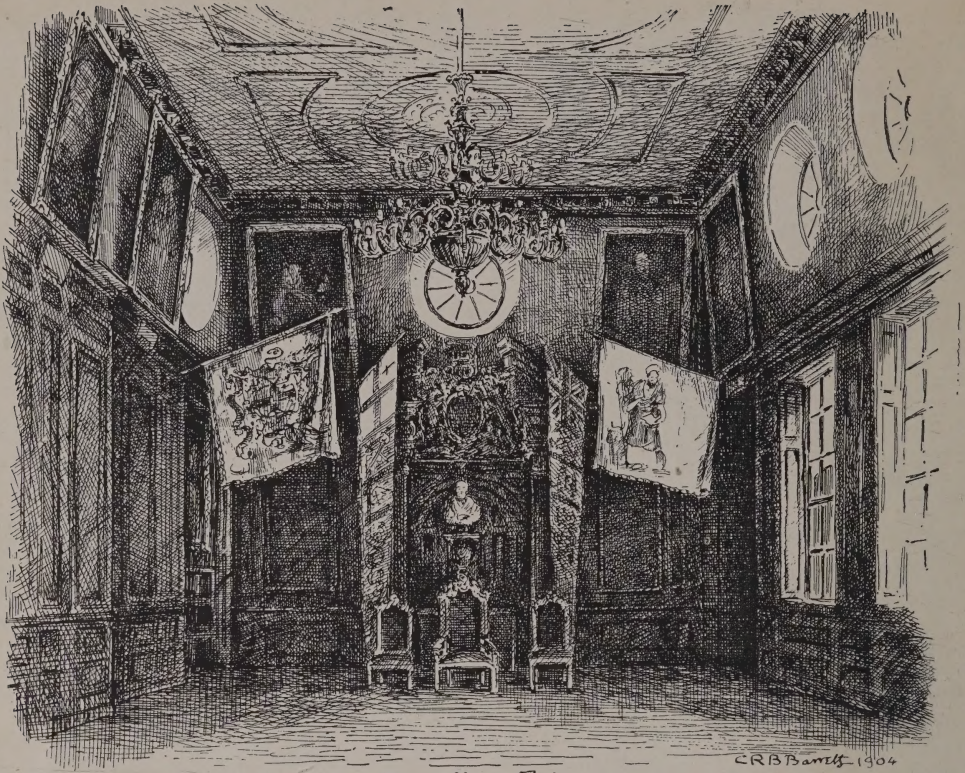
remembered that we had reached that period in the history of our country when younger sons had migrated and were migrating to London, to enter into trades and professions. They were not the heirs to ancestral acres, and had to make their way. When one goes into the question, it is surprising what an amount of "blood" there was in the traders and professional men whose names crop up in Tudor and Stuart times.

Thus, then, the Apothecaries, separated by Royal Charter from the Grocers, began their corporate existence. All was not, however, plain sailing. The Grocers were a wealthy body, the Apothecaries were unendowed. The Grocers, wealthy though they were, objected to the loss to their Company which the separation of the Apothecaries

involved. The Apothecaries—at least, a portion of them—resented the separation on the ground that they were well enough off as they were, and that the establishment of a new Company would be to them personally expensive. An agitation to obtain the revocation of the new Charter was begun. In this agitation the City Corporation joined, a request being even made to King James, through the Recorder of London, to again reunite the Companies by a new Charter; or, if this could not be granted, as an alternative, that all apothecaries should not be compelled to join the new Company. Meanwhile the City delayed the enrolment of the Charter. But King James, who could be both firm and wise on occasions, would brook no interference with his expressed intention, and the City was peremptorily ordered forthwith to complete the establishment by the formal enrolment of the Charter. The first meeting of the new Society took place on December 16, 1617, when the Master, Edmund Phillips, the Wardens, Stephen Higgins and Thomas Founes, and certain of the Assistants, took the requisite oaths at Gray's Inn before "Mr. Attorney General,



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THE GREAT HALL. Upper End.

C.R.B. Smith 1904

Mr. Dr. Atkins, and Mr. Dr. Mayerne, the King's Phiscons," being "thereunto authorised under the Great Seal." Of other officials elected we find Robert Metcalfe was the first Clerk, Tobias Wincke the first Beadle, while the honour of being the first Freeman of the Company rests with one Christopher Bridges. We have said that the Minute Books of the Society are perfect, and, this being so, readers will not be astonished to hear that they furnish in their lengthy series much matter of considerable interest. All of them are in MS., of some the writing is crabbed indeed, of others the pages are of the neatest copperplate. From them a curious series of stories may be gleaned, by which the struggles, the rise, the increase in importance, and finally the high position attained by the Society in the present day, can be ascertained in full detail. But space is limited, and it is only possible to touch here and there on the recorded transactions of nearly three centuries.

Here is one instance. By the Charter the duty of searching for defective and bad medicines was imposed upon the Society: and to them was committed the charge of

punishing offenders in this matter. Searches began as early as September 9, 1618, and they continued as late as 1833, the name of the last delinquent being Thomas Porter, of Bishopsgate Street. The first was one Hanck, a weaver, who, in conjunction with a fellow-sinner called Pelwell, was as a beginning admonished "neither to make nor to sell any more medicines." This right of search was a disagreeable duty. It often led to small cases of assault by the parties accused. Abusive language was at times bestowed on the Master and Wardens who searched the shops, on one occasion the Master's beard being pulled by an irate druggseller, whose faulty goods were burnt before his door. One of the first scientific duties undertaken by the Society was "a schedule of all medicines belonging to the art of an Apothecary."

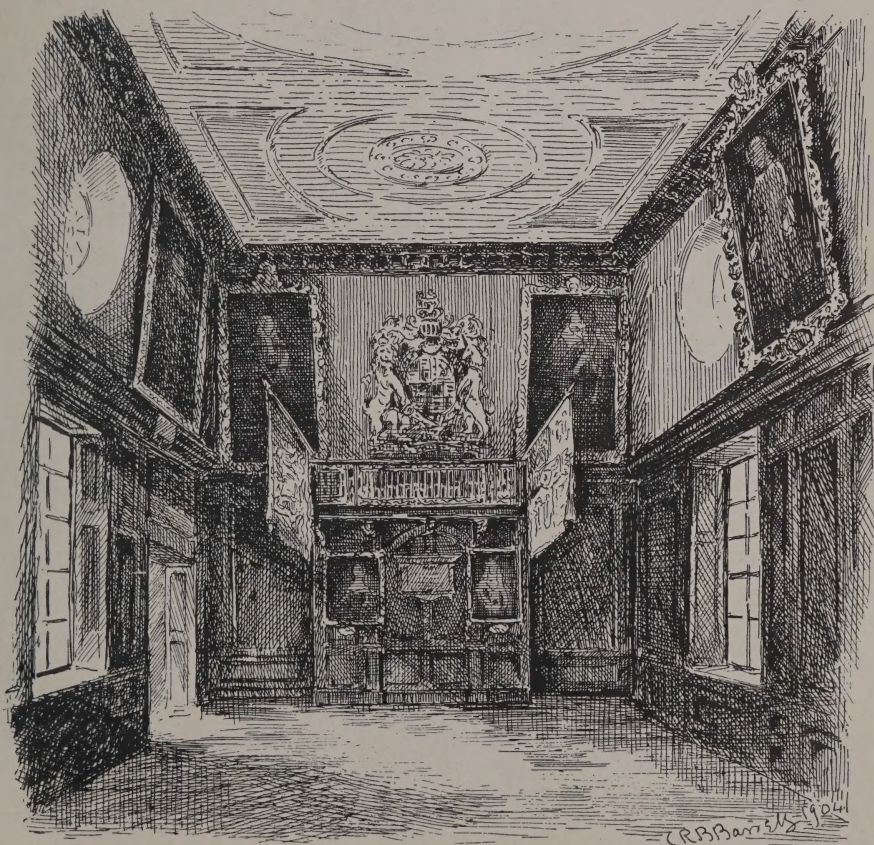
Early in the existence of the Society the apprentice question forced itself to the front. The rules insisted on certain qualifications being displayed by candidates for apprenticeship, and the examinations were for those days severe. An equal degree of severity marked the examination of those who, having

served their time, desired to become Freemen. From the very first, rejection was frequent, and it may be added that to this day the high standard of examination merit required from those seeking the diplomas of the Society to practise in medicine and surgery, carries on the traditional severity of the early apothecaries.

Now, being an unendowed Society, it will be easily understood that there was no home or hall, at first, in which the business could be carried on. The early meetings took place at the private house of the Master, but this was, of course, found to be inconvenient, and a movement was initiated to purchase a house in "foster Lane" which belonged to a Mr. Trappe. The title not proving good, it was then determined to rent, at a cost of £10 per annum, the Hall of the Paynter-Stainers. Here the Society was located till they purchased their present estate in Water Lane. This purchase was not carried out till November 23, 1632, when Cobham House was sold to them by Anne Lady Howard of

Effingham, for the sum of £1,800. This house was destroyed in the Great Fire, after which the present building was erected.

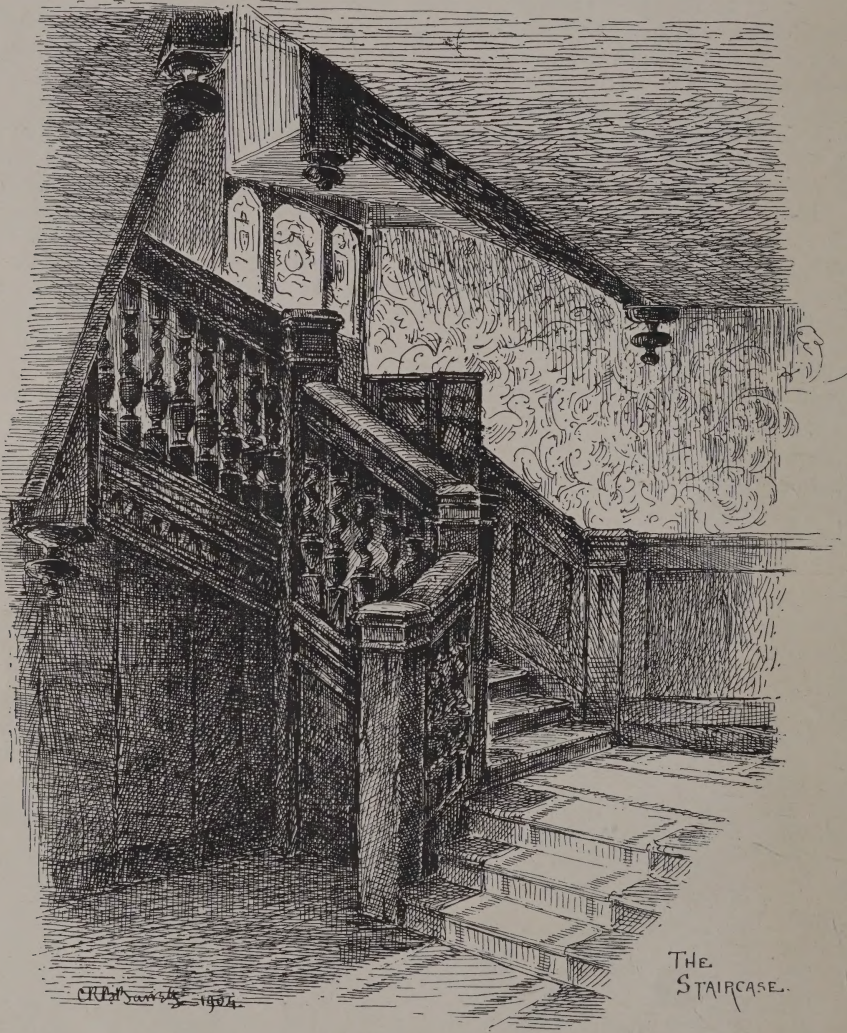
Into the trials, troubles, legal disputes, and civic opposition which the young Company had to undergo while struggling towards consolidation, it is impossible to enter fully. The contentions with the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons would fill a volume, not to mention those with various civic corporations, such as the Distillers. How petition after petition was forwarded to the Council by all and sundry concerned, with a view to disestablish or to curtail the powers of the Society, can here be but named. Nor can more than mention be made of the fact that for years Acts of Parliament were frequently introduced which were intended to be detrimental. Twice the very existence of the Society was imperilled by a "Quo-Warranto"—viz., in 1634-5, and again in 1684. In the latter case the temporary surrender of the Charter followed. But all these attacks cost money to repel. The



THE GREAT HALL, LOWER END.

Minute Books are full of counter-petitions, proposals for Acts of Parliament, opinions of learned counsel, and bills of costs of proceedings in all kinds of Courts, from the Star Chamber downwards. Yet the fact remains that, despite all odds, the Society of Apothecaries has decisively defeated all its

plate-chest was gradually being filled with tankards, covered cups, salts, and other valuable possessions, and, moreover, the customary present of a spoon, "silver or silver gilt," which was made by new Freemen on admission, added to the Society's worldly wealth. The first spoon was given in

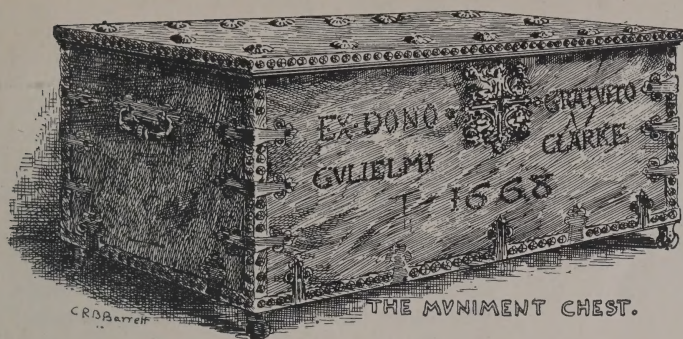


THE
STAIRCASE.

antagonists in the long run and stands in its present proud position.

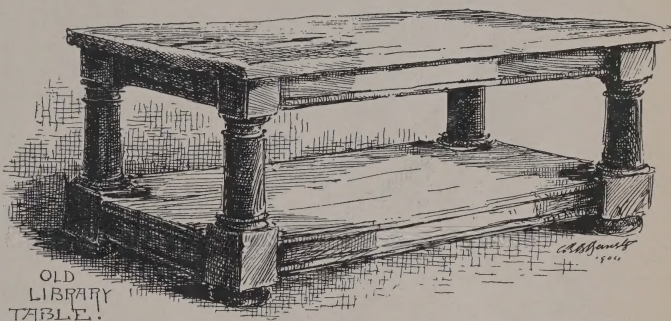
To return to Cobham House. Thither as soon as the purchase was completed, and the licence in mortmain passed, the goods and chattels, plate, deeds and property of the Society were removed. The place was in a somewhat ruinous condition, however, and quaint accounts remain showing the repairs needed to render it habitable. By gifts the

1620, and the custom only ceased in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Alas! of all this noble collection hardly anything remains. As "old and unfashionable," frequently these fine old specimens were sold. A little modern plate has been added recently, but beyond the few objects figured in the illustration, and the mace, of which nothing is anywhere said in the Minute Books, the plate has vanished. Gideon de Laune gave some fine



cups, and these were sold in 1759, yet de Laune is the traditional founder of the Society. Of the coronets or crowns, three in number, which were worn by the Master and the Wardens at the installation ceremony always held in August, no mention is made, either, so that it cannot be fixed when the custom began, or where the crowns were made, and we know not when they disappeared.

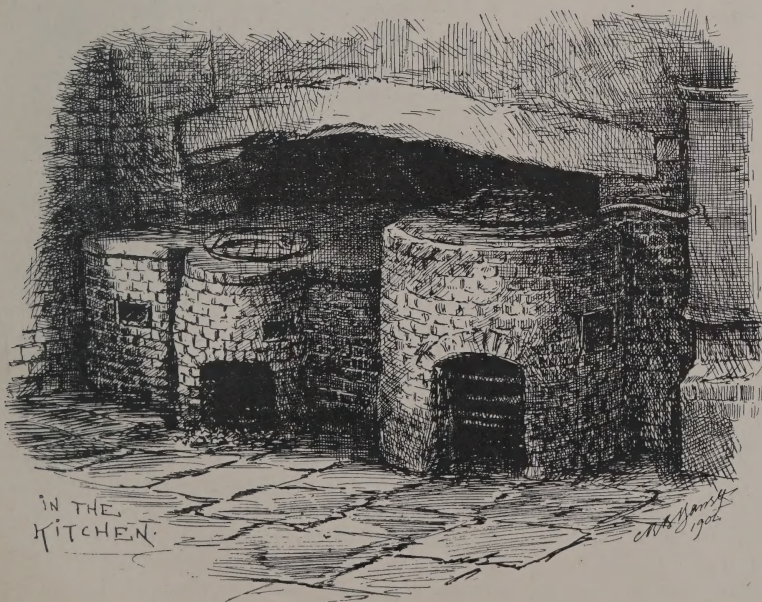
That they existed we learn from a MS. programme drawn up as a guide for the installation of the Master and Wardens for 1780. The ceremony was a quaint one. It began with a breakfast off a sirloin of beef at noon. This lasted an hour, when the Court adjourned in procession to church.



Of course, a band of music was in attendance in the courtyard, and lined up on one side, the other being occupied by the Stewards. The Stewards, it may be remarked, did not go to church.

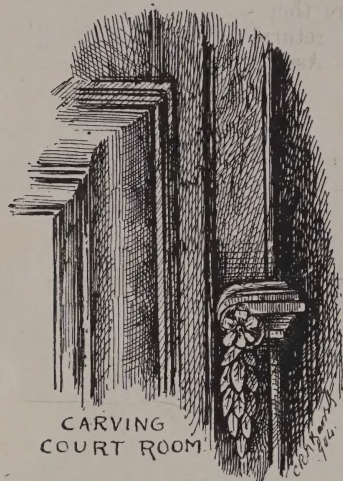
When the company returned, feasting began, and this, as the programme tells us, "ought to be over by five o'clock." Then the Master and Wardens and Assistants withdrew to the Court Room, where they put on their livery and coronets and returned to the Hall in procession. The Assistants, it may be added, were

"uncloathed," which ambiguous term, however, means that they did not wear their livery gowns. This procession was to officially show the old Master and Wardens to the last time. Then a strange proceeding took place. The Master and Wardens selected three Assistants to personate them in a new procession. This formed up and re-entered the Hall, where a search was made among the company assembled to find the Master and Wardens designate. These, of course, had been already elected, but it was etiquette for them to hide themselves, as if modestly unwilling to accept the great honour thrust on them. There were three hide-and-seek processions — one for the new Master and



one each for the new Wardens. All this time the loving-cups of "negus" for Master and Wardens were going around, and the band was engaged in discoursing such melodies as the "Conquering Hero," "Rule, Britannia!" and "God Save the King!" When the ceremony was completed, the new Master and Wardens took the oaths in the Court Room, and after votes of thanks to the retiring officials the Court adjourned.

This account relates the most elaborate ceremony traceable in the records of the

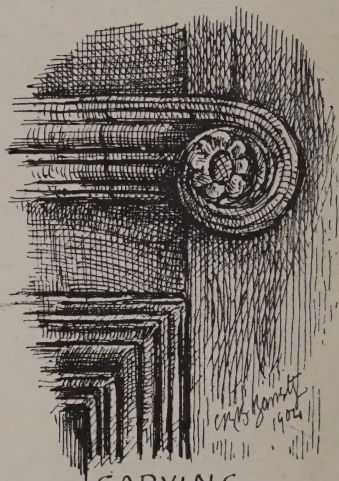


CARVING
COURT ROOM

Society. Of dinners there were in early times many, and the expense thereof fell very heavily on the various officials, who had but a slender allowance made to meet the costs of hospitality. Here and there we find that abuses crept in. Once or twice the proceedings became almost rowdy, and it was needful to pass resolutions at the Court to check such misbehaviour. Balls used to be given in the Hall at one time, but as an annual custom this did not long obtain. Quite early in the history of the Society it was found that, owing to the heavy drain on its resources, economy must be practised, and edicts against excessive feasting were issued as early as 1642. As a matter of fact, had not wealthy members of the Society come forward time after time with loans of money, bankruptcy must have occurred. As an instance of how hardly pressed for money the Company was, it may be noted that the Hall was let to a Lady Darcy in 1640, during whose tenancy it became a regular rookery. Later there was another queer tenant, one Richardson, a dancing-master, who carried

on his select dancing-academy there, for youths and maidens, with the sole proviso that "no apprentices" should be permitted to join his classes. But when the Guards of Dutch William were quartered on the premises the dancing-classes came to an abrupt end. The buildings, as they at present exist, are nearly what they were when erected after the Great Fire. In this connection it is strange that the reference to this calamity in the Minute Books is confined to a few words only. It is perhaps even more strange that, except being called "the Sickness," the Great Plague is similarly neglected; true, it is recorded that a dinner did not take place, in consequence.

Let us now consider the buildings. Entering from Water Lane by the very modest gateway—a gateway which on its inner face bears a lengthy Latin inscription recording the rebuilding of the premises after the Fire—we reach a stone-flagged courtyard. In front,

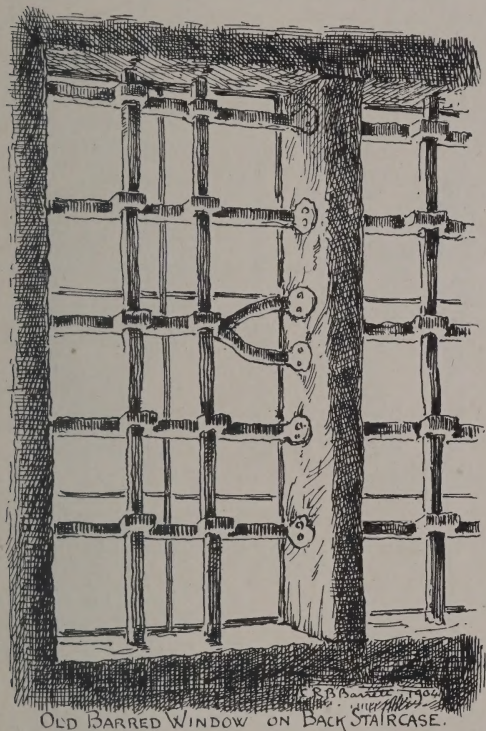


CARVING
COURT ROOM.

on the first floor, is the Great Hall, one of the entrances to which is by an external staircase in one corner of the "quad." Beneath this Hall are the offices of the Accountant of the Society. The factory for the preparation of drugs lies behind it, and also the new and extensive Examination Rooms. On the right hand of the courtyard the premises have been let off; on the left is the Colonnade, a glazed-in portion of which encloses part of the present retail drug store. Beneath the Colonnade is a door which admits to the grand old oak staircase. What that

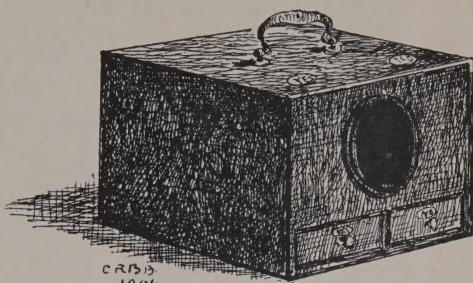
staircase is like the illustrations will give some idea. By a passage just beyond the entrance to the staircase admission is obtained to the old-world kitchen, a small portion of which is shown in another illustration. Along the side of this passage is to be found the carved beam cornice.

Ascending the stair, the first landing is reached, and this portion of the premises contains what one must call the State Apartments. These consist in the Library, the Great Hall, the Court Room, and the Parlour. The Library, as the sketch shows, is a long, narrow, oak-panelled room; it was originally



OLD BARRED WINDOW ON BACK STAIRCASE.

a "gallery" extending over the Colonnade, and is so termed in the earlier notices thereof. Down one side is a bookcase, which contains part of the library of the Society. It may be remarked that some of these books are of considerable interest and of no inconsiderable value. The fireplace at the end of the room is of good type and well carved. Each side of the fireplace are two deep cupboards, the original "repositorie" for the library. It should here be mentioned that the existence of a library was owing to a chance free gift of "a booke called Gerrard's herbal" by a Mr. Thomas Johnson, of Snow Hill, as far back as 1633. The library books



OLD BALLOT BOX.

luckily escaped the Fire in 1666. The windows of the Library contain a little armorial glass, and on the wall hangs a copy of the Grant of Arms to the Society. This Grant from Camden (Clarenceux) is dated December 12, 1617, and was viewed and approved in the visitation of London by Henry St. George (Richmond) in 1634. Oddly enough, from the Minute Books we find that the Grant was not applied for until April 6, 1620. As a specimen of heraldry the blazon is of the debased order of the period: Apollo, the first physician, with sunrays, dart, and bow, and bestriding a dragon, is on the shield, unicorns for supporters, and a medical rhinoceros as crest. Of heraldic decoration there is very little indeed to be found on the premises: three or four representations of the Arms of the Society in glass and oak, the Royal Arms of Stuart and Hanoverian times, and two coats on glass dated and bearing the names of Masters of the Society. One of these purports to belong to John Lorymer, but the arms are those of Lowman; the other bears the name correctly of Jacob Lowe Wheeler. In the Library is to be found a most massive ancient oak table, which is the most antique piece of furniture in the possession of the Society.

The room known as the Parlour is lofty but unpanelled, and has at some period been the subject of alteration, in that its original



doorway has been blocked up, and a fresh opening made into the Court Room. It contains eleven pictures, mostly portraits of Masters of the Society or officials. One, the portrait of an unknown man in an oval frame, is perhaps the best. A large picture of William III. making his entry into Exeter is interesting from an historical point of view, though hardly of such importance as the picture by Hilliard, painted in 1577, and representing the review by Queen Elizabeth of the Fleet after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. This hangs in the Corridor, very high up and in almost darkness. It was presented by Mr. Nussey, an Assistant, in 1846, and as a picture by Hilliard is mentioned in Walpole's "Anecdotes of Painting."

The Court Room, which communicates both with the Parlour and the Corridor, is a very fine chamber. It is lofty and nearly square, panelled throughout in good brown old oak, except where the former doorway existed leading to the Parlour. It contains a handsome cornice, boldly moulded panels, and a dado string-course with very peculiarly carved finials at the corners and doorposts. The arrangement of the panels is most uncommon, as each large one contains within its frame three smaller ones, so arranged as to be flush with the surface of the outer panel. Above the fireplace is the fine portrait of Gideon de Laune, and attached to the beam is a piece of carving once belonging to the Society's barge.

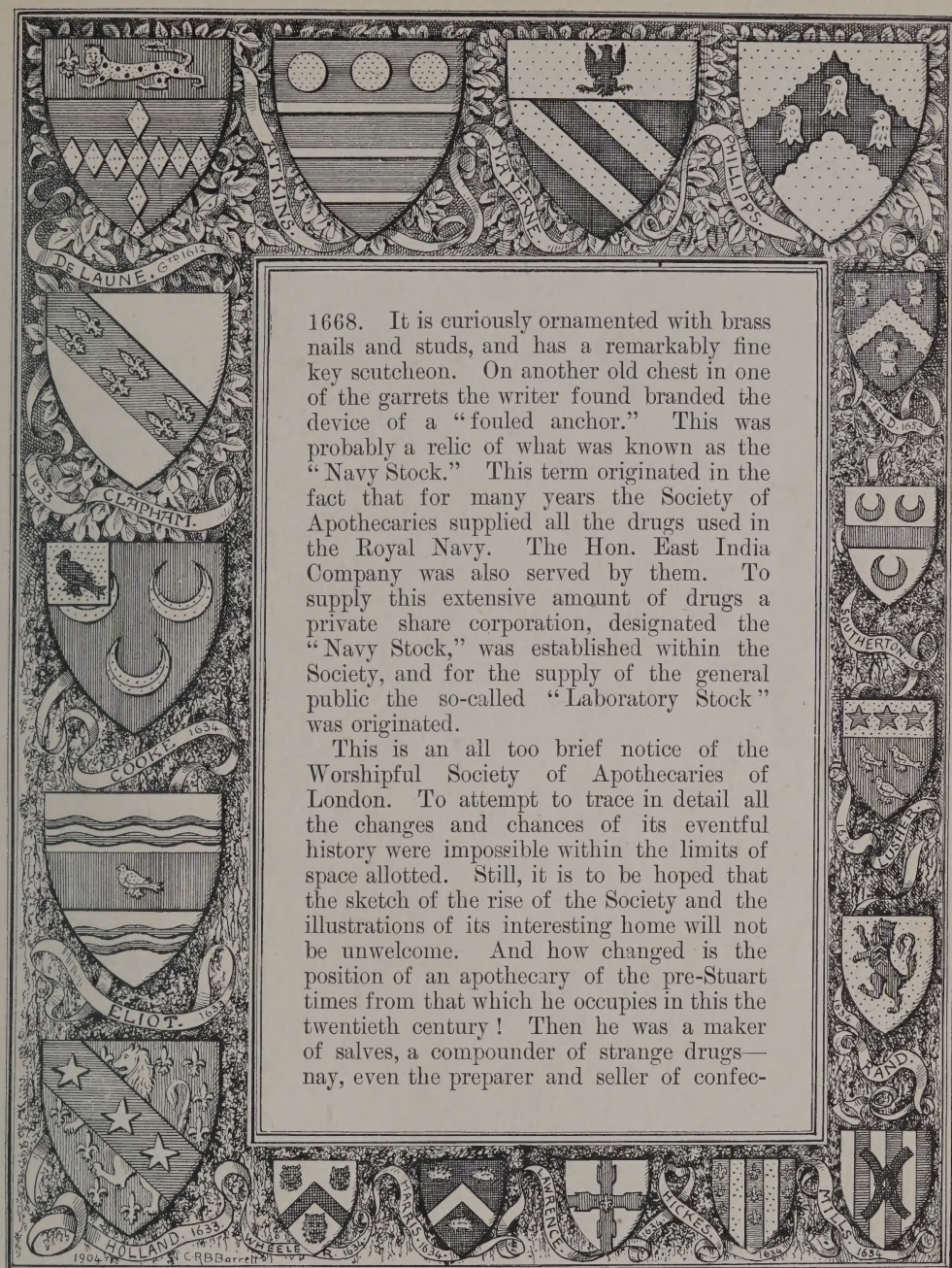
A beautiful twelve-light brass chandelier hangs from the centre of the ceiling. This was presented by Edward Mills, Master in 1766. It bears his arms and those of the Society. Two other pairs of brass sconces of fine workmanship are to be seen on the walls. Among the pictures here is a sketch (the original) of Reynolds's portrait of John Hunter. There is also a fine panel portrait of James I., and beneath it a beautiful miniature of Mary Queen of Scots. But perhaps the most alluring picture in the room is Hudson's fine portrait of Cornelius Dutch, Clerk to the Society for no less than thirty years, 1726-56. The quaint old fellow in his green coat laced with gold is one at whose presentment one cannot but look and look long.

In the Court Room as well as in the Parlour the Society shows a really wonderful collection of chairs, a collection not easily to be surpassed. In this, which is the official room of the Society, the ballot-boxes are kept; one of these, the older of the two, dates from 1784, and was the gift of Mr. Field, a Warden.

Before passing to the Great Hall, it may be well to mention the upper flights of the Staircase and the garrets. In the Staircase wall is to be found the only old window remaining. It is heavily barred. The Great Hall, which is some sixty feet in length, is a noble apartment. For about half its height it is panelled in oak, and on the panels are recorded the names of all those who have contributed to the many charities of the Society. At what is now the upper end of the Hall, the fine carved oak screen which once cut off the lower end near the external door has been moved back to the wall; and the former upper end of the Hall is now occupied by a Gallery. From the Gallery and at



the other end hang four old banners, belonging to the Society, which used to be carried in procession on festive occasions, such as on Lord Mayor's Day. There are in addition two of the old barge streamers, which date back to before the nineteenth century. The writer had the pleasure of superintending the careful repair of these some few years ago—one banner was in more than two hundred pieces. The fine brass chandelier of twenty-four lights was presented by Sir Benjamin Rawlins, Kt., Sheriff of London and Middlesex in 1737. The bust of Gideon de Laune stands at the upper end of the Hall, beneath the Arms of the Society. One or two interesting chests are still preserved. One of them is of immense size, and was presented by a member named Clark, in



1668. It is curiously ornamented with brass nails and studs, and has a remarkably fine key scutcheon. On another old chest in one of the garrets the writer found branded the device of a "fouled anchor." This was probably a relic of what was known as the "Navy Stock." This term originated in the fact that for many years the Society of Apothecaries supplied all the drugs used in the Royal Navy. The Hon. East India Company was also served by them. To supply this extensive amount of drugs a private share corporation, designated the "Navy Stock," was established within the Society, and for the supply of the general public the so-called "Laboratory Stock" was originated.

This is an all too brief notice of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries of London. To attempt to trace in detail all the changes and chances of its eventful history were impossible within the limits of space allotted. Still, it is to be hoped that the sketch of the rise of the Society and the illustrations of its interesting home will not be unwelcome. And how changed is the position of an apothecary of the pre-Stuart times from that which he occupies in this the twentieth century! Then he was a maker of salves, a compounder of strange drugs—nay, even the preparer and seller of confec-

ARMS OF EARLY MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY.

tionery of sorts. Later he became a dispenser of physicians' prescriptions, and began to practise as well as dispense. Later, again, by authority of Parliament, he was permitted not only to practise in medicine and surgery—to become a "general practitioner," in fact—but beyond this, by means of the Society's Examination Board, to grant fully

qualifying diplomas to medical students. One wonders how many thousand diplomas have been sealed on the old oak table in the Library.

[Our illustrations are selected from the wealth of drawings made by Mr. Barrett for his large volume on the history of the Society, and are here reproduced by permission of the publisher, Mr. Eliot Stock.—ED.]

THE OUTRAGEOUSNESS OF A MERE BOY.

By ASHTON HILLIERS,

Author of "*Memoirs of a Person of Quality*," "*The Mistakes of Miss Manisty*,"
"*An Old Score*."

"O H, Mr. Merrick, do look! I believe I'm in a strong position, but I don't in the least know where to go next."

White half-turned within her rug, the cane deck-chair giving to the movement of her slight, elastic body; she was a bonny, clear-skinned creature of twenty. Red, a long, lean young fellow, three years older than his sister, glanced up from his pieces with just the faintest of frowns, but submitted.

"Yes, come along," he said in ungracious assent to the unspoken question in the eye of the boy who slouched up and overlooked the board. Merrick was an angular eighteen-year-old, whose quaint, irregular features were at the moment smudged with coal-dust, of which they were sublimely unconscious.

"Good gracious, what a state you are in!" said the girl, withdrawing her wraps from possible contact.

"Yes—been stoking her. I won't touch you. Aha, ye—s——" He rubbed a downy chin with an appallingly black finger.

"It is almost lunch-time," hinted Red, sniffing warm oil and cotton-waste.

"Ye—s, I want a brush-up; but time for this first. Suppose we declare mate in four moves, Miss FitzPetre?"

"I should prefer to play it out, if it's the same to you," said Red, with hauteur. Brothers are bad losers; he had thought himself winning, but was about to be undeceived.

"*Es stimmt*," murmured the boy softly, and turned to go.

"What a head you have!" cried the girl in admiration, but her ally was already rattling down the companion to his cabin.

"You'll play with that cub until you have trouble with him. I know the sort," said her brother unkindly, gathering the pieces.

The girl tossed her head, "Is it feeling pooh-lie to-day, then?"

The steward announced luncheon. She bowed distantly to Mr. Scobie, the boy's tutor (a holiday engagement, its terms not

the deck to his First. "Yes, lovely weather. She is making a good run of it. I'm more than pleased with her. We should raise Gib before you are up to-morrow morning, Miss FitzPetre. Pleasant lunching without the fiddles, isn't it? I've laid a course a little inshore of our usual, that you may see Mafra."

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Sibley," said the lady. (She didn't address the man as captain, knowing that his class dislike it.) "And do you not think that we might have our bull's-eyes open for a little? See, she scarcely rolls an inch." The captain consented upon terms which the girl secretly determined to break. The boy came to table with the fish, and was chaffed by the captain upon his exploits. His tutor ignored him. Brady, the Second officer, a Yorkshireman, conscious that his manners were hardly level with the requirements of his owner's lady daughter, fed silently apart or conversed with the boy upon the salvage methods of the "Filey Pirates." "Oh, but I say, now, you don't really? What, board a ship that has carried something away without leave, hustle the master off the bridge, drive the watch below, and keep 'em there while you take charge? My eye!" murmured the delighted youngster.

The *Birmingham*, steamship, 2,500 tons, was the latest addition to the Clarion Line, FitzPetre & Merrick, towards the founding of which some years earlier the former had contributed the cash and the latter the experience. The partnership had been commercially successful; but although the elders worked amicably, the young people of the two families had never hit it off. The FitzPetre boys had not taken to business; they respected their blood and spoke with pity of the pater's sacrifices. With them we have nothing to do save with the younger, Mr. Salvin FitzPetre, a medical, who having caught three septic throats running in the course of his studies, had been advised to take a voyage in one of the Line. His sister had shipped with him, for the man had been low enough at starting, albeit the Bay had picked him up nobly. Judge of the disgust of the young gentleman upon finding that,



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